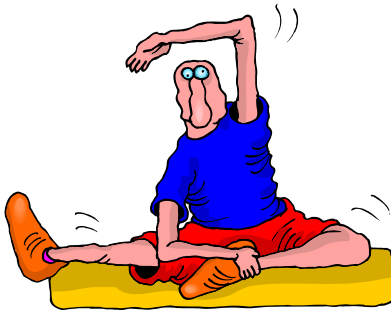


MOVE!

Prevention Tips for Sore Muscles or Cramps

- 1** Gradually increase how often, how hard, and how long you are active.
- 2** Wear appropriate and comfortable shoes for physical activity.
- 3** Drink plenty of water before, during, and after being active.
- 4** Wear comfortable socks that fit well and keep your feet dry.
- 5** Warm-up before and cool-down for all activities or exercise.



Warm-up Warm-ups take 5 to 15 minutes.

1. Do a few minutes of mild stretching if you plan to do something more vigorous than walking.
2. Do your planned activity, but at a lower intensity (lower heart rate) for a brief time. This may mean walking slowly for a few minutes before speeding up.

Cool-down Cool-downs take 5 to 15 minutes.

1. Continue your activity, but lower your intensity (lower heart rate) for a brief time.
2. Do a few minutes of mild stretching for all activities including walking.

If you do get a muscle cramp:

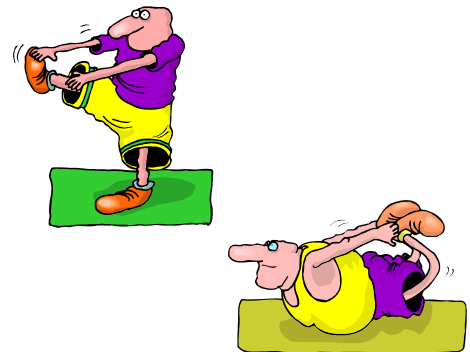
- Stretch the muscle, then massage it. Repeat.
- If there is still pain, put ice on the cramped muscle for a few minutes.

If you have any other injury that is affecting your ability to exercise, talk with your doctor or *MOVE!* staff member for guidance.

Stretch Those Muscles

Your body is like a rubber band.

Your muscles will become less flexible as you age and when you are not active. This makes movement more difficult. For this reason, stretching is important.



Stretching is one of the best ways to prevent and avoid muscle soreness, cramps, and hurting yourself. Stretching helps you be more flexible and feel relaxed.

How to stretch

- Do a short warm-up before stretching.
- Move slowly until you feel the muscle stretch. A safe stretch is gentle and relaxing.
- Hold the stretch steady for 15 to 30 seconds. **DO NOT** bounce.
- Relax. Then repeat 3 to 5 times.
- Stretch within your limits.
- Breathe slowly in and out. Do not hold your breath.
- Relax, enjoy, and feel good about yourself.

Important: Never stretch if you have pain before you begin. If a stretch causes much pain, stop doing it, or do it more gently. Listen to your body!